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REMARKS

By the present amendment, claims 2-9, 12-15, 17, 18, 20-25, 31, 37, 39, 40, 44, and 46 have been cancelled. Claims 10, 16, 19, 26, 28, 30, 42, 43, and 47-50 have been amended to correct clerical errors except where noted below. Claims 51-58 have been added.

Claim 1 has been amended to include the limitations of allowed claim 12. Claim 43 has been amended to include the limitations of claim 44. New claim 51 is patterned after allowed claim 3 with the immaterial limitations from claim 1 omitted. New claim 52 is patterned after allowed claim 9, again with immaterial limitations from claim 1 omitted. New claim 53 is patterned after allowed claim 15 with the immaterial limitations of claim 1 omitted. New claim 54 is patterned after allowed claim 17 with the immaterial limitations of claim 1 omitted. New claim 56 is patterned after allowed claim 20 with immaterial limitations of claim 1 omitted. New claim 57 is patterned after allowed claim 21 with immaterial limitations of claim 1 omitted. New claim 58 is patterned after allowed claim 25 with immaterial limitations of claim 1 omitted.

All of the rejected claims have been cancelled with the exception of claim 15 (now new claim 53), independent claim 32, dependent claims 35 and 36 and independent claim 43. With the exception of claim 43, these claims are directed to the concept of a powered extraction cleaner wherein a drive belt is connected between a transmission assembly and a driven wheel and a tension adjuster maintains a predetermined tension on the belt when the base is driven in the front and rear directions.

These claims have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) on several different grounds including; ASPA in view of Ripple as applied in claim 1 and further in view of Martin et al.; ASPA in view of Meyer et al. '740 in view of Martin et al. '640; and Lewis in view of Meyer et al. '740 and McCormick. With respect to the combination of ASPA in view of Meyer et al. '740 in view of Martin et al., it is the Examiner's position that Meyer et al. '740 discloses a belt between the transmission assembly and a driver and Martin et al. discloses a belt tensioner. It is believed that the Examiner is in error in holding that there is a belt between the transmission assembly and the driver of Meyer et al. '740. There is a belt between the motor and the transmission assembly but no belt between the transmission assembly and the driver in Meyer et al. '740. Further, with

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respect to Martin et al. '640, it does not disclose a belt tensioner on a belt between a transmission and drive wheel. Although Martin et al. '640 does disclose a belt between a transmission and a drive wheel, there is no tensioner on that belt. Further, even if the Martin et al. '640 brush tensioner were to be used on the Martin et al. '640 transmission to driver wheel belt, it still would not be functional to tension the belt both in a forward and reverse direction. The belt tensioner in Martin et al. '640 is adapted to tension the brush belt 80 which a unidirectional belt. Reversal of belt would require a different tensioner which could switch from maintaining the tension when the belt is driven in one direction to maintaining the tension when the belt is driven in an opposite direction. It does not appear that this function would be achieved by the Examiner's alleged combination. The same arguments can be made with respect to the rejection of claim 15 over ASPA in view of Ripple as applied to claim 1 and further in view of Martin et al. '640. The same logic has been used by the Examiner to reject claim 15 on the basis of this combination and this logic is faulty for the same reasons as set forth above with respect to the combination of ASPA in view of Meyer et al. '740 and Martin et al. '640.

With respect to the rejection of claim 32 over the Louis et al. '442 in view of Meyer et al. '740 and McCormick '971 it is believed that same deficiency is found in Examiner's alleged combination of references. Although Meyer et al. '740 does not disclose a belt between a transmission assembly and a driver as represented by the Examiner, Martin et al. '640 does disclose this feature. The alleged combination of Louis et al. '442 in view of Meyer et al. '740 and McCormick '971 has the same deficiencies as the other rejections in that there is no disclosure of a belt tensioner on a belt between a transmission and a driver wheel wherein the belt tensioner is functional to maintain the tension in the belt in both forward and reverse directions.

Reconsideration of the rejection of claim 15 (now claim 53) and claims 32, 35, and 36 in view of the foregoing is respectfully requested.

Claims 43-46 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Louis et al. '442 in view of Meyer et al. '740 and Frederick et al. '862. This rejection is respectfully traversed. Louis et al. '442 discloses a carpet extractor with an automatic conversion

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valve. It does not relate to the power drive mechanism. The patent to Mayer et al. '740 relates to a transmission for a vacuum cleaner that is responsive to pushing and pulling forces on the handle. The Frederick et al. '862 patent relates to a self-propelled vacuum cleaner with a lockout feature on the handle for manually locking the grip on the handle in a neutral position. The lockout feature comprises a slide on the handle which moves between the lockout position and an actuation position in a T-shaped slot.

The alleged combination of Louis et al. '442, Meyer et al. '740, and Frederick et al. '862 is traversed. There is no basis for making the alleged combination. The Examiner has given us no reasons why these disclosures can be combined. Indeed, there is no disclosure in any of the references which would warrant their combination. Thus, the alleged combination is inappropriate.

Claim 43 has been amended to incorporate the limitations of claim 44 which has been cancelled. Claim 43, as amended, calls for a lock, including a rotatable knob, mounted on the handle and accessible to the operator for selectively locking the handle grip in a neutral position. This concept is not disclosed in any of the references.

Thus, even if the alleged combination of Louis et al. '442, Meyer et al. '740, Frederick et al. '862 were to be combined, however untenably, it still would not reach the claimed invention of claim 43. The alleged combination would not include a lock with a rotatable knob mounted on the handle for selectively locking the handle grip in a neutral position. It is believed therefore that claims 43 and 45 are not obvious in view of the Louis et al. '442, the Meyer et al. '740, and the Frederick et al. '842 patents.

Reconsideration of the rejection of claims 44 and 45 in view of the foregoing remarks is respectfully requested.

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In view of the foregoing remarks and amendments it is submitted that all of the claims in this application are in condition for allowance. Early notification of allowability is respectfully requested. If the Examiner does not believe that all of the claims are in condition for allowance, the courtesy of a telephone interview with the undersigned attorney is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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